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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : COCOLA et al.  
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Hon. Commissioner of Patents  
 and Trademarks  
 Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to initial examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

*A* Claim 1 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows: *D*

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1. A method for data management in an analytical laboratory, comprising the steps of:
- providing a plurality of containers for the laboratory analysis of biological specimens, each container being associated with its own identification code;
  - associating a patient code with a patient to be subjected to analysis;
  - for each container used for said patient, generating in a data processing system a combination of said patient code and said identification code of the corresponding container;
  - carrying out, by means of at least one analyzer, at least one analysis on the container or containers used for said patient, the analyzer entering the results of said analysis, combined with the identification code of the container or containers, into the data processing system.